DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 324 620 CG 022 882

TITLE The Professional Practice of Career Counseling and Consultation: A Resource Document.
INSTITUTION American Association for Counseling and Development, Alexandria, VA.; National Career Development Association, Alexandria, VA.
PUB DATE Jan 88
NOTE 18p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Counseling; Competence; *Counselor Qualifications; *Ethics; *Standards

ABSTRACT

This resource guide for career counselors contains seven sections. Section A provides an overview of the National Career Development Association (NCDA) and describes the development of this document. Section B defines vocational/career counseling and lists vocational/career counseling competencies approved by the NCDA Board of Directors in 1981. Section C offers consumer guidelines for selecting a career counselor, looking at counselor credentials and explaining what career counselors do. Section D describes services provided by career development specialties, makes a case for differentiation of specialties, and provides capsule descriptions of these specialties: Career Counselors (private and public settings); Human Resources/Career Development Specialists (organizational settings); Job Placement Counselors (public setting); Career/Employment Search Consultants (private settings); Employment Agents (private settings); and Cooperative Education Instructors (educational settings). Section E contains NCDA ethical standards related to general areas, the counseling relationship, measurement and evaluation, research and publication, consulting, and private practice. Section F lists the procedures for processing ethical complaints and section G provides additional resources. (NB)

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THE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE OF CAREER COUNSELING AND CONSULTATION: A RESOURCE DOCUMENT

published by

The National Career Development Association

(Founded in 1913 as the National Vocational Guidance Association)

January, 1988

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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SECTION A: OVERVIEW

The National Career Development Association

The National Career Development Association (NCDA), established in 1913 as the National Vocational Guidance Association, is the oldest of all professional counseling associations and a founding division of the 57,000-member American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD). Originally called the American Personnel and Guidance Association, AACD brings together 13 divisions, 2 organizational affiliates, and 56 state and international branches representing the guidance, counseling, and human development fields.

NCDA has a diverse membership of over 6,000 career counseling and development professionals--including school and college counselors, agency counselors, counselor educators, researchers, and human resource workers in business, industry, and government. Through leadership at the local, state, national, and international levels, NCDA works to facilitate the professional growth of its members, to develop and encourage adherence to professional standards, and to increase public understanding of career counseling practices over the life span.

This Resource Document

Background

Work on the resources included in this document began in 1979 when the NCDA Committee for Pre-service and In-service Training developed a preliminary list of competencies needed by career counselors in a variety of settings. The list drew on previous statements developed by various professional organizations and research agencies. After review by practitioners, theorists, and other career development leaders, the preliminary list was revised and approved by the NCDA Board of Directors in 1981. The approved list, titled "Vocational/Career Counseling Competencies," is presented in Section B.

In 1983, NCDA initiated steps to establish standards for certification of individuals with career counseling responsibilities. In 1984, the first career counseling specialty examination was administered and, in the initial year, over 1,100 career counselors were certified. Certification standards for the Career Counselor Specialty are now administered by the National Board for Certified Counselors. A copy of the standards can be obtained by writing the Board at 5999 Stevenson Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304.

A concurrent NCDA effort to help the public better select and benefit from career counselors culminated in the development of "Consumer Guidelines for Selecting a Career Counselor." The guidelines, presented in Section C, were approved by the NCDA Board of Directors in 1985.

Current Focus

In 1986, the NCDA Ethics Committee, under the leadership of Richard Evans and Frank Karpati, recognized the need to help the public determine what could be expected from the various specialties providing career services. Section D identifies six career development specialties and provides capsule descriptions of their services.

In 1986, the NCDA Ethics Committee also began to integrate NCDA documents of value to the general public, national/state legislatures, and licensure agencies. The rationale was to provide a comprehensive set of resource materials conveniently available to those concerned with the practice, administration, credentialling, or regulation of career counseling. This document, which includes NCDA's Ethical Standards and guidelines for processing ethical complaints, is the result of the Committee's efforts.

Publication of this resource document was approved by the NCDA Board of Directors at its April 1987 meeting in New Orleans. Dale Prediger, a member of the NCDA Board, provided editorial assistance. The document will be updated as materials are revised and as new materials become available.

SECTION B: VOCATIONAL/CAREER COUNSELING COMPETENCIES

Definition of Vocational/Career Counseling

Vocational/career counseling consists of those activities performed or coordinated by individuals who have the professional credentials to work with and counsel other individuals or groups of individuals about occupations, careers, life/career, career decision making, career planning, career pathing, or other career development related questions or conflicts.

Vocational/Career Counseling Competencies

In order to work as a professional engaged in vocational/career counseling, the individual must demonstrate minimum competencies in six designated areas. These six areas are: General Counseling, Information, Individual/Group Assessment, Management/Administration, Implementation, and Counseling.

General Counseling Skills--Counseling competencies considered essential to effective vocational/career counseling. Demonstration of:

1. Knowledge of general counseling theories and techniques.
2. Skills in building a productive relationship between counselor and client.
3. Ability to use appropriate counseling techniques in effectively assisting individuals with career choice and life/career development concerns.
4. Ability to assist the client to recognize the relationship between self-understanding and effective life/career decisions.
5. Ability to assist the client in the identification of internal personal factors related to life/career decision making including personality, values, interests, aptitudes, and motives.
6. Skills in recognizing and modifying stereotypes held by clients related to career choice.
7. Ability to assist the client in the identification of contextual factors in career decision making, including family, friends, educational opportunities, and finances.
8. Ability to understand and help clarify the client's decision making process.

Information--Information base and knowledge essential for professionals engaging in vocational/career counseling. Demonstration of:

1. Knowledge of education, training, employment trends, labor market, and career resources that provide information about job tasks, functions, salaries, requirements, and future outlooks related to broad occupational fields.
2. Knowledge of basic concepts related to vocational/career counseling including career development, career pathing, and career patterns.
3. Knowledge of career development and decision making theories.
4. Knowledge of the changing roles of women and men and the linkage of work, family, and leisure.
5. Knowledge of resources and techniques designed for use with special groups.
6. Knowledge of strategies to store, retrieve, and disseminate vocational/career information.

Individual/Group Assessment--Individual/group assessment skills considered essential for professionals engaging in vocational/career counseling. Demonstration of:

1. Knowledge of appraisal techniques and measures of aptitude, achievement, interest, values, and personality.
2. Knowledge of strategies used in the evaluation of job performance, individual effectiveness, and program effectiveness.
3. Ability to identify appraisal resources appropriate for specified situations and populations.
4. Ability to evaluate appraisal resources and techniques in terms of their validity, reliability, and relationships to race, sex, age, and ethnicity.
5. Ability to demonstrate the proper administration of appraisal techniques.
6. Ability to interpret appraisal data to clients and other appropriate individuals or groups of people.
7. Ability to assist clients in appraising quality of life and working environments.

Management/Administration--Management and administration skills necessary to develop, plan, implement, and manage comprehensive career development programs. Demonstration of:

1. Knowledge of program designs that can be used in the organization of career development services.
2. Knowledge of needs assessment techniques and practices.
3. Knowledge of performance objectives used in organizing career development programs and in setting goals for comprehensive career development programs.
4. Knowledge of management concepts and leadership styles used in relation to career development programs.
5. Ability to adjust management and administration methods to reflect identified career development program problems and specified situational needs.
6. Ability to prepare budgets and time lines for career development programs.
7. Ability to design, compile, and report an evaluation of career development activities and programs.

Implementation--Knowledge and skills essential to the adoption of career development programs and strategies in a variety of settings. Demonstration of:

1. Knowledge of program adoption and planned change strategies.
2. Knowledge of personal and environmental barriers affecting the implementation of career development programs.
3. Ability to implement individual and group programs in career development for specified populations.
4. Ability to implement a public relations effort in behalf of career development activities and services.
5. Ability to devise and implement a comprehensive career resource center.
6. Ability to implement pilot programs in a variety of career development areas including: appraisal, decision-making, information giving, and general career counseling.

Consultation--Knowledge and skills considered essential in relating to individuals and organizations that impact the career development process. Demonstration of:

1. Knowledge of consultation strategies and consultation models.
2. Ability to provide effective career consultation to influential individuals such as parents, teachers, employers, community groups, and the general public.
3. Ability to provide career development consultation to business and professional groups.
4. Ability to convey program goals and achievements to key personnel in positions of authority: legislators, executives, and others.
5. Ability to provide data on the cost-effectiveness of career counseling and career development activities.

SECTION C: CONSUMER GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING A CAREER COUNSELOR

Sometimes it seems that virtually everyone is a vocational coach, ready and anxious to give advice, suggestions, and directions. Unfortunately, all are not equally able to provide the kind of help persons need in making decisions about what to do with their lives. Promises and luxurious trappings are poor substitutes for competence. Thus, the selection of a professional career counselor is a very important task. The following guidelines are offered to assist you in making this selection.

Credentials

The designation "National Certified Career Counselor" signifies that the career counselor has achieved the highest certification in the profession. Further, it means that the career counselor has:

- earned a graduate degree in counseling or in a related professional field from a regionally accredited higher education institution.
- completed supervised counseling experience which included career counseling.
- acquired a minimum of three years of full-time career development work experience.
- successfully completed a knowledge-based certification examination.

Other professional career counselors may be trained in a one- or two-year, graduate level counselor preparation program with a specialty in career counseling. They may be licensed by state agencies, or they may be certified by national or state professional associations.

What Do Career Counselors Do?

The services of career counselors differ depending on competence. National Certified Career Counselors or other professional career counselors help people make decisions and plans related to life/career directions. The strategies and techniques are tailored to the specific needs of the person seeking help. It is likely that the career counselor will do one or more the following:

- conduct individual and group personal counseling sessions to help clarify life/career goals.
- administer and interpret tests and inventories to assess abilities, interests, etc. and to identify career options.
- encourage exploratory activities through assignments and planning experiences.
- utilize career planning systems and occupational information systems to help individuals better understand the world of work.
- provide opportunities for improving decision making skills.
- assist in developing individualized career plans.
- teach job hunting strategies and skills and assist in the development of resumes.
- help resolve potential personal conflicts on the job through practice in human relations skills.
- assist in understanding the integration of work and other life roles.
- provide support for persons experiencing job stress, job loss, career transition.

Ask any counselor you are considering for a detailed explanation of services (career counseling, testing, employment search strategy planning, resume writing, etc.). Make sure you understand the service, your degree of involvement, and your financial commitment.

Fees--Select a counselor who is professionally trained, who specifies fees and services upon request, and who lets you choose the services you desire. Make certain you can terminate the services at any time, paying only for services rendered.

Promises--Be skeptical of services that make promises of more money, better jobs, resumes that get speedy results, or an immediate solution to career problems.

Ethical Practices--Professional career counselors are expected to follow the ethical guidelines of organizations such as the National Career Development Association, the National Board for Certified Counselors, the American Association for Counseling and Development, or the American Psychological Association. Professional codes of ethics advise against grandiose guarantees and promises, exorbitant fees, and breaches of confidentiality, among other things. You may wish to ask for a detailed explanation of services offered, your financial and time commitments, and a copy of the ethical guidelines used by the career counselor or service you are considering.

SECTION D: SERVICES PROVIDED BY CAREER DEVELOPMENT SPECIALTIES

A Case for Differentiation of Specialties

Employment opportunities in the United States continuously undergo major change. Beginning with the early 1970s, the information explosion has dramatically increased the pace and magnitude of that change. Within the 20-year period from 1980 to 2000, over 60 million job environments will likely be altered, and the majority of manufacturing jobs will disappear. As a result, millions of workers will be occupationally displaced or mismatched. Concurrently, American youth will face added competition for jobs made more diverse and complex by the advances of technology. The increasing number of women returning to paid employment (nearly 70% of those seeking employment during the 20-year period) and the "graying" of the labor force are additional examples of change.

As a result of the changes noted above, the demand for career counseling and related services is likely to increase substantially. Already there are indications that the general public, regulatory bodies, and the profession are in acute need of guidelines for distinguishing among various types of career-related services. For example, the recent emergence of career/employment search consultants, also known as job search counselors, has created considerable confusion on the part of the general public and members of the media. Both groups have difficulty differentiating between career counselors, who assist clients undecided about career options, and career/employment search consultants, who teach job search techniques to career-decided clients and provide support services.

Employment agents constitute another career specialty subject to misunderstanding on the part of the general public. Closely related to career/employment search consultants, employment agents are paid a fee only when someone is placed in a job. Hence, the appropriate match between employer needs and client needs may not be of direct concern. Career counselors, on the other hand, address this concern when they assist clients with job search strategies after helping them sort through their career options.

In summary, the demand for career services and the diversity of these services are rapidly expanding. Given this demand and diversity, it is no wonder that there are misunderstandings regarding the services provided by career counselors and job placement counselors, career counselors and employment agents, cooperative education instructors and job placement counselors, and so on. Thus, organizations and agencies that offer, license, or regulate career services must develop well-defined specialty descriptions and communicate those descriptions to their members, to their employees, and to the public they serve. This document is a first step in that direction

Capsule descriptions of the services provided by six career specialties are presented below. The descriptions are based on a survey of the literature as well as on correspondence and consultation with professionals who hold key positions in a variety of career-related organizations. It would be impossible to acknowledge all individual contributions. Instead, NCDA wishes to recognize the following professional organizations for the assistance and suggestions they provided.

- American Society for Training and Development
- American Vocational Association
- Association of Computer-Based Systems for Career Information
- College Placement Council
- National Center for Research in Vocational Education
- National Employment Counselors Association
- New Jersey Vocational Educational Association

The efforts of these professional organizations to improve the delivery of career development services to millions of people and to foster greater awareness of professional standards and practices are greatly appreciated. NCDA hopes that these organizations will continue to give attention to the tasks of defining the services provided by various career development specialties and making the definitions available to the public.

Capsule Descriptions of Specialties

The descriptions of career development specialties presented below imply training and competence on the part of persons who provide career services. Section B of this document lists a number of important competencies. With respect to training, NCDA strongly endorses the certification standards advanced by the National Board for Certified Counselors. These standards include:

- a graduate degree in counseling or in a related professional field from a regionally accredited higher education institution.
- graduate level coursework pertinent to the practice of career counseling and related specialties.
- supervised counseling experience which includes career counseling.
- successful completion of a knowledge-based certification examination.

These standards appear to apply in principle, if not in all particulars, to each of the career development specialties described below. Specifics regarding the standards may be obtained by writing the National Board for Certified Counselors, 5999 Stevenson Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304. Many states have similar certification and licensing standards.

Career Counselors (Private and Public Settings)

- Provide theory-based life/career and leisure counseling to individuals and groups.
- Teach decision-making skills and assist with career exploration.
- Assist in developing individualized career plans.
- Assist in the integration of work and other life roles.
- Evaluate, organize, and provide educational and occupational information resources and information about the labor market.
- Administer and interpret interest, ability, and achievement tests that aid in identifying and evaluating career options.
- Assist with job-search planning and resume development.
- In some settings, provide career-related support services until successful employment or re-employment is secured.

Human Resources/Career Development Specialists (Organizational Setting)

- Participate in organizational development;
- Coordinate the career development of employees from initial selection to retirement planning.
- Conduct job analyses and develop performance evaluation standards.
- Integrate organizational and individual goals to optimize efficiency, productivity, and employee satisfaction.
- Provide theory-based life/career and leisure counseling.
- Teach decision-making skills and assist with career redirection.
- Assist in developing individualized career plans.
- Evaluate, organize, and provide educational and occupational information resources and information about the labor market.
- Administer and interpret interest, ability, and achievement tests that aid in identifying and evaluating career options.
- Help resolve potential personal conflicts on the job through practice in human relations skills.
- Structure preretirement and outplacement services.
- Offer outplacement services until successful reemployment.

Job Placement Counselors (Public Setting)

- Develop effective working relationships with employers.
- Assess the needs of employers and clients and act as a liaison between parties.
- Assist clients in securing meaningful employment.
- Provide federal and state labor law information.
- Teach job search, interviewing, and negotiating skills.
- Assist with resume development.
- Conduct local labor market and follow-up studies to optimize service efficiency.

Career/Employment Search Consultants (Private Setting)

- Offer job search assistance for clients who possess career direction.

- Provide labor market information.
- Teach job search, interviewing, and negotiating skills.
- Assist with resume development.
- Provide administrative support services until re-employment.

Employment Agents (Private Setting)

- Obtain employment for clients on a contractual basis where a fee is paid only by the employer.
- Serve as a liaison between the employer and the client for the purpose of placing the client with an employer.

Cooperative Education Instructors (Educational Setting)

- Secure supervised work experience that is consistent with the curricular activities, needs, and abilities of students.
- Serve as a liaison between the school and the employer.
- Evaluate the educational development and work performance of the student in conjunction with an employment supervisor.

SECTION E: NATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION ETHICAL STANDARDS

These Ethical Standards were developed by the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), an independent, voluntary, not-for-profit organization incorporated in 1982. Titled "Code of Ethics" by NBCC and last amended in February 1987, the Ethical Standards were adopted by the National Career Development Association (NCDA) Board of Directions at its April 1987 meeting in New Orleans, LA. Only minor changes in wording (e.g., the addition of specific references to NCDA members) were made.

Preamble: NCDA is an educational, scientific, and professional organization dedicated to the enhancement of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of each individual and, thus, to the service of society. This code of ethics enables the NCDA to clarify the nature of ethical responsibilities for present and future professional career counselors.

Section A: General

1. NCDA members influence the development of the profession by continuous efforts to improve professional practices, services, and research. Professional growth is continuous through the career counselor's career and is exemplified by the development of a philosophy that explains why and how a career counselor functions in the helping relationship. Career counselors must gather data on their effectiveness and be guided by their findings.

2. NCDA members have a responsibility to the clients they are serving and to the institutions within which the services are being performed. Career counselors also strive to assist the respective agency, organization, or institution in providing the highest caliber of professional services. The acceptance of employment in an institution implies that the career counselor is in agreement with the general policies and principles of the institution. Therefore, the professional activities of the career counselor are in accord with the objective of the institution. If, despite concerted efforts, the career counselor cannot reach agreement with the employer as to acceptable standards of conduct that allow for changes in institutional policy that are conducive to the positive growth and development of clients, then terminating the affiliation should be seriously considered.

3. Ethical behavior among professional associates (e.g., career counselors) must be expected at all times. When accessible information raises doubt as to the ethical behavior of professional colleagues, the NCDA member must take action to attempt to rectify this condition. Such action uses the respective institution's channels first and then uses procedures established by the American Association for Counseling and Development, of which NCDA is a division.

4. NCDA members neither claim nor imply professional qualifications which exceed those possessed, and are responsible for correcting any misrepresentations of these qualifications by others.

5. NCDA members must refuse a private fee or other remuneration for consultation or counseling with persons who are entitled to their services through the career counselor's employing institution or agency. The policies of some agencies may make explicit provisions for staff members to engage in private practice with agency clients. However, should agency clients desire private counseling or consulting services, they must be apprised of other options available to them. Career counselors must not divert to their private practices, legitimate clients in their primary agencies or of the institutions with which they are affiliated.

6. In establishing fees for professional counseling services, NCDA members must consider the financial status of clients and the respective locality. In the event that the established fee status is inappropriate for a client, assistance must be provided in finding comparable services of acceptable cost.

7. NCDA members seek only those positions in the delivery of professional services for which they are professional qualified.

8. NCDA members recognize their limitations and provide services or only use techniques for which they are qualified by training and/or experience. Career counselors recognize the need, and seek continuing education, to assure

competent services.

9. NCDA members are aware of the intimacy in the counseling relationship, maintain respect for the client, and avoid engaging in activities that seek to meet their personal needs at the expense of the client.

10. NCDA members do not condone or engage in sexual harassment which is defined as deliberate or repeated comments, gestures, or physical contacts of a sexual nature.

11. NCDA members avoid bringing their personal or professional issues into the counseling relationship. Through an awareness of the impact of stereotyping and discrimination (i.e., biases based on age, disability, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, or sexual preference), career counselors guard the individual rights and personal dignity of the client in the counseling relationship.

12. NCDA members are accountable at all times for their behavior. They must be aware that all actions and behaviors of a counselor reflect on professional integrity and, when inappropriate, can damage the public trust in the counseling profession. To protect public confidence in the counseling profession, career counselors avoid public behavior that is clearly in violation of accepted moral and legal standards.

13. NCDA members have a social responsibility because their recommendations and professional actions may alter the lives of others. Career counselors remain fully cognizant of their impact and are alert to personal, social, organizational, financial, or political situations or pressures which might lead to misuse of their influence.

14. Products or services provided by NCDA members by means of classroom instruction, public lectures, demonstrations, written articles, radio or television programs, or other types of media must meet the criteria cited in Sections A through F of these Ethical Standards.

Section B: Counseling Relationship

1. The primary obligation of NCDA members is to respect the integrity and promote the welfare of the client, regardless of whether the client is assisted individually or in a group relationship. In a group setting, the career counselor is also responsible for taking reasonable precautions to protect individuals from physical and/or psychological trauma resulting from interaction within the group.

2. The counseling relationship and information resulting from it remains confidential, consistent with the legal obligations of the NCDA member. In a group counseling setting, the career counselor sets a norm of confidentiality regarding all group participants' disclosures.

3. NCDA members know and take into account the traditions and practices of other professional groups with whom they work, and they cooperate fully with such groups. If a person is receiving similar services from another professional, career counselors do not offer their own services directly to such a person. If a career counselor is contacted by a person who is already receiving similar services from another professional, the career counselor carefully considers that professional relationship and proceeds with caution and sensitivity to the therapeutic issues as well as the client's welfare. Career counselors discuss these issues with clients so as to minimize the risk of confusion and conflict.

4. When a client's condition indicates that there is a clear and imminent danger to the client or others, the NCDA member must take reasonable personal action or inform responsible authorities. Consultation with other professionals must be used where possible. The assumption of responsibility for the client's behavior must be taken only after careful deliberation, and the client must be involved in the resumption of responsibility as quickly as possible.

5. Records of the counseling relationship, including interview notes, test data, correspondence, audio or visual tape recordings, electronic data storage, and other documents are to be considered professional information for use in counseling. They should not be considered a part of the records of the institution or agency in which the NCDA member is employed unless specified by state statute or regulation. Revelation to others of counseling material must occur only upon the expressed consent of the client; career counselors must make provisions for maintaining confidentiality in the storage and disposal of records. Career counselors providing information to the public

or to subordinates, peers, or supervisors have a responsibility to ensure that the content is general; unidentified client information should be accurate and unbiased, and should consist of objective, factual data.

6. NCDA members must ensure that data maintained in electronic storage are secure. The data must be limited to information that is appropriate and necessary for the services being provided and accessible only to appropriate staff members involved in the provision of services by using the best computer security methods available. Career counselors must also ensure that electronically stored data are destroyed when the information is no longer of value in providing services.

7. Data derived from a counseling relationship for use in counselor training or research shall be confined to content that can be disguised to ensure full protection of the identify of the subject/client and shall be obtained with informed consent.

8. NCDA members must inform clients before or at the time the counseling relationship commences, of the purposes, goals, techniques, rules and procedures, and limitations that may affect the relationship.

9. All methods of treatment by NCDA members must be clearly indicated to prospective recipients and safety precautions must be taken in their use.

10. NCDA members who have an administrative, supervisory and/or evaluative relationship with individuals seeking counseling services must not serve as the counselor and should refer the individuals to other professionals. Exceptions are made only in instances where an individual's situation warrants counseling intervention and another alternative is unavailable. Dual relationship with clients that might impair the career counselor's objectivity and professional judgment must be avoided and/or the counseling relationship terminated through referral to another competent professional.

11. When NCDA members determine an inability to be of professional assistance to a potential or existing client, they must, respectively, not initiate the counseling relationship or immediately terminate the relationship. In either event, the career counselor must suggest appropriate alternatives. Career counselors must be knowledgeable about referral resources so that a satisfactory referral can be initiated. In the event that the client declines a suggested referral, the career counselor is not obligated to continue the relationship.

12. NCDA members may choose to consult with any other professionally competent person about a client and must notify clients of this right. Career counselors must avoid placing a consultant in a conflict-of-interest situation that would preclude the consultant's being a proper party to the career counselor's efforts to help the client.

13. NCDA members who counsel clients from cultures different from their own must gain knowledge, personal awareness, and sensitivity pertinent to the client populations served and must incorporate culturally relevant techniques into their practice.

14. When NCDA members are engaged in intensive, short-term therapy, they must ensure that professional counseling assistance is available to the client(s) during and following the counseling.

15. NCDA members must screen prospective group counseling participants, especially when the emphasis is on self-understanding and growth through self-disclosure. Career counselors must maintain an awareness of each group participant's welfare throughout the group process.

16. When electronic data and systems are used as a component of counseling services, NCDA members must ensure that the computer application, and any information it contains, is appropriate for the respective needs of clients and is nondiscriminatory. Career counselors must ensure that they themselves have acquired a facilitation level of knowledge with any system they use including hands-on application, search experience, and understanding of the uses of all aspects of the computer-based system. In selecting and/or maintaining computer-based systems that contain career information, career counselors must ensure that the systems provide current, accurate, and locally relevant information. Career counselors must also ensure that clients are intellectually, emotionally, and physically compatible to using the computer application and understand its

purpose and operation. Client use of a computer application must be evaluated to correct possible problems and assess subsequent needs.

17. NCDA members who develop self-help, stand-alone computer software for use by the general public, must first ensure that it is initially designed to function in a stand-alone manner, as opposed to modifying software that was originally designed to require support from a counselor. Secondly, the software must include program statements that provide the user with intended outcomes, suggestions for using the software, descriptions of inappropriately used applications, and descriptions of when and how counseling services might be beneficial. Finally the manual must include the qualifications of the developer, the development process, validation data, and operating procedures.

Section C: Measurement and Evaluation

1. NCDA members must provide specific orientation or information to an examinee prior to and following the administration of assessment instruments or techniques so that the results may be placed in proper perspective with other relevant factors. The purpose of testing and the explicit use of the results must be made known to an examinee prior to testing.

2. In selecting assessment instruments or techniques for use in a given situation or with a particular client, NCDA members must evaluate carefully the instrument's specific theoretical bases and characteristics, validity, reliability, and appropriateness. Career counselors are professionally responsible for using unvalidated information with special care.

3. When making statements to the public about assessment instruments or techniques, NCDA members must provide accurate information and avoid false claims or misconceptions concerning the meaning of psychometric terms. Special efforts are often required to avoid unwarranted connotations of terms such as IQ and grade-equivalent scores.

4. Because many types of assessment techniques exist, NCDA members must recognize the limits of their competence and perform only those functions for which they have received appropriate training.

5. NCDA members must note when tests are not administered under standard conditions or when unusual behavior or irregularities occur during a testing session and the results must be designated as invalid or of questionable validity. Unsupervised or inadequately supervised assessments, such as mail-in tests, are considered unethical. However, the use of standardized instruments that are designed to be self-administered and self-scored, such as interest inventories, is appropriate.

6. Because prior coaching or dissemination of test materials can invalidate test results, NCDA members are professionally obligated to maintain test security. In addition, conditions that produce most favorable test results must be made known to an examinee (e.g., penalty for guessing).

7. NCDA members must consider psychometric limitations when selecting and using an instrument, and must be cognizant of the limitations when interpreting the results. When tests are used to classify clients, career counselors must ensure that periodic review and/or re-testing are conducted to prevent client stereotyping.

8. An examinee's welfare, explicit prior understanding, and agreement are the factors used when determining who receives the test results. NCDA members must see that appropriate interpretation accompanies any release of individual or group test data (e.g., limitations of instrument and norms).

9. NCDA members must ensure that computer-generated test administration and scoring programs function properly thereby providing clients with accurate test results.

10. NCDA members who are responsible for making decisions based on assessment results, must have appropriate training and skills in educational and psychological measurement--including validation criteria, test research, and guidelines for test development and use.

11. NCDA members must be cautious when interpreting the results of instruments that possess insufficient technical data, and must explicitly state to examinees the specific purposes for the use of such instruments.

12. NCDA members must proceed with caution when attempting to evaluate and interpret performances of minority group members or

other persons who are not represented in the norm group on which the instrument was standardized.

13. NCDA members who develop computer-based test interpretations to support the assessment process, must ensure that the validity of the interpretations is established prior to the commercial distribution of the computer application.

14. NCDA members recognize that test results may become obsolete, and avoid the misuse of obsolete data.

15. NCDA members must avoid the appropriation, reproduction, or modification for published tests or parts thereof without acknowledgment and permission from the publisher.

Section D: Research and Publication

1. NCDA members will adhere to relevant guidelines on research with human subjects. These include:

a. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Subtitle A, Part 46, as currently issued.
b. American Psychological Association. (1982). Ethical principles in the conduct of research with human participants. Washington, DC: Author.
c. American Psychological Association. (1981). Research with human participants. American Psychologist, 36, 633-638.
d. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. (Buckley Amendment to P. L. 93-380 of the Laws of 1974).
e. Current federal regulations and various state privacy acts.

2. In planning research activities involving human subjects, NCDA members must be aware of and responsive to all pertinent ethical principles and ensure that the research problem, design, and execution are in full compliance with the principles.

3. The ultimate responsibility for ethical research lies with the principal researcher, though others involved in the research activities are ethically obligated and responsible for their own actions.

4. NCDA members who conduct research with human subjects are responsible for the subjects' welfare throughout the experiment and must take all reasonable precautions to avoid causing injurious psychological, physical, or social effects on their subjects.

5. NCDA members, who conduct research must abide by the following basic elements of informed consent:

a. a fair explanation of the procedures to be followed, including an identification of those which are experimental
b. a description of the attendant discomforts and risks
c. a description of the benefits to be expected
d. a disclosure of appropriate alternative procedures that would be advantageous for subjects
e. an offer to answer any inquiries concerning the procedures
f. an instruction that subjects are free to withdraw their consent and to discontinue participation in the project or activity at any time

6. When reporting research results, explicit mention must be made of all the variables and conditions known to the NCDA member that may have affected the outcome of the study or the interpretation of the data.

7. NCDA members who conduct and report research investigations must do so in a manner that minimizes the possibility that the results will be misleading.

8. NCDA members are obligated to make available sufficient original research data to qualified others who may wish to replicate the study.

9. NCDA members who supply data, aid in the research of another person, report research results, or make original data available, must take due care to disguise the identity of respective subjects in the absence of specific authorization from the subject to do otherwise.

10. When conducting, and reporting research, NCDA members must be familiar with, and give recognition to, previous work on the topic, must observe all copyright laws, and must follow the principles of giving full credit to those to whom credit is due.

11. NCDA members must give due credit through joint authorship, acknowledgment, footnote statements, or other appropriate means to those who have contributed significantly to the

research and/or publication, in accordance with such contributions.

12. NCDA members should communicate to others the results of any research judged to be of professional value. Results that reflect unfavorably on institutions, programs, services, or vested interests must not be withheld.

13. NCDA members who agree to cooperate with another individual in research and/or publication must incur an obligation to cooperate as promised in terms of punctuality of performance and with full regard to the completeness and accuracy of the information required.

14. NCDA members must not submit the same manuscript, or one essentially similar in content, for simultaneous publication consideration by two or more journals. In addition, manuscripts that are published in whole or substantial part in another journal or published work should not be submitted for publication without acknowledgment and permission from the previous publication.

Section E: Consulting

Consultation refers to a voluntary relationship between a professional helper and help-needing individual, group, or social unit in which the consultant is providing help to the client(s) in defining and solving a work-related problem or potential work-related problem with a client or client system.

1. NCDA members, acting as consultants, must have a high degree of self- awareness of their own values, knowledge, skills, limitations, and needs in entering a helping relationship that involves human and/or organizational change. The focus of the consulting relationship must be on the issues to be resolved and not on the person(s) presenting the problem.

2. In the consulting relationship, the NCDA member and client must understand and agree upon the problem definition, subsequent goals, and predicted consequences of interventions selected.

3. NCDA members must be reasonably certain that they, or the organization represented, have the necessary competencies and resources for giving the kind of help that is needed or that may develop later, and that appropriate referral resources are available to the consultant.

4. NCDA members in a consulting relationship must encourage and cultivate client adaptability and growth toward self-direction. NCDA members must maintain this role consistently and not become a decision maker for clients or create a future dependency on the consultant.

5. NCDA members conscientiously adhere to the NCDA Ethical Standards when announcing consultant availability for services.

Section F: Private Practice

1. NCDA members should assist the profession by facilitating the availability of counseling services in private as well as public settings.

2. In advertising services as private practitioners, NCDA members must advertise in a manner that accurately informs the public of the professional services, expertise, and counseling techniques available.

3. NCDA members who assume an executive leadership role in a private practice organization do not permit their names to be used in professional notices during periods of time when they are not actively engaged in the private practice of counseling.

4. NCDA members may list their highest relevant degree, type, and level of certification and/or license, address, telephone number, office hours, type and/or description of services, and other relevant information. Listed information must not contain false, inaccurate misleading, partial, out-of-context, or otherwise deceptive material or statements.

5. NCDA members who are involved in a partnership or corporation with other professionals must, in compliance with the regulations of the locality, clearly specify the separate specialties of each member of the partnership or corporation.

6. NCDA members have an obligation to withdraw from a private-practice counseling relationship if it violates the NCDA Ethical Standards, if the mental or physical condition of the NCDA member renders it difficult to carry out an effective professional relationship, or if the counseling relationship is no longer productive for the client.

SECTION F: PROCEDURES FOR PROCESSING ETHICAL COMPLAINTS

As a division of the American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD), the National Career Development Association (NCDA) adheres to the guidelines and procedures for processing ethical complaints and the disciplinary sanctions adopted by AACD. A complaint against an NCDA member may be filed by any individual or group of individuals ("complainant"), whether or not the complainant is a member of NCDA. (Action will not be taken on anonymous complaints.)

For specifics on how to file ethical complaints and a description of the guidelines and procedures for processing complaints, contact:

AACD Ethics Committee
c/o Executive Director
American Association for Counseling
and Development
5999 Stevenson Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22304

SECTION G: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

American Association for Counseling and Development. (1981). Ethical standards. Alexandria, VA: Author.

American Psychological Association. (1981). Ethical principles of psychologists. American Psychologist, 36, 633-638.

Association of Computer-Based Systems for Career Information. (1982). Handbook of standards for computer-based career information systems. Eugene, OR: Author.

College Placement Council. (1986). Standards and guidelines for career planning and placement. Bethlehem, PA: Author.

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Cappeto, M.A. (1980). The career services professional. Journal of College Placement, 40(2), 42-44, 46-47.

Caulum, D., & Lambert, R. (Eds.). (1985). Guidelines for the use of computer-based career information and guidance systems. Eugene, OR: Association of Computer-Based Systems for Career Information.

George, R. L., & Christiani, T. S. (1986). Counseling: Theory and practice (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall. (pp. 262-265).

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Phillips-Jones, L., Jones, G. B., & Drier, H. N. (1984). Resources for identifying training competencies for career guidance personnel. Journal of Career Education, 10, 168-177.

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Date Filmed

March 29, 1991